

Message Text

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S/PRS - MR. FUNSETH (INFO)

H - MR. FLATEN (INFO)

SSM - MR. MC ANDREW

NEA - MS. GRIFFIN

NEA/ARN - MR. DRAPER

NEA/IAI - MR. SMITH

NEA/EGY - MR. NEWBERRY

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USMISSION SINAI

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
CINCEUR

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GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL; CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: QUESTIONS TAKEN AT PRESS BRIEFING, SEPT. 23, 1976

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION WAS POSTED IN THE DEPARTMENT
PRESS OFFICE IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS TAKEN AT THE SEPTEMBER 23 PRESS BRIEFING:

Q. CAN YOU GIVE AN ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT LEVEL OF FIGHTING IN LEBANON AND WHAT IT MEANS RESPECTING THE VIABILITY OF THE SARKIS ADMINISTRATION? CAN YOU GIVE US A GENERAL ANALYSIS OF WHAT THE CURRENT MILITARY SITUATION MEANS WITH RESPECT TO THE STABILITY OF THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT?

A. WE HOPE THE INAUGURATION OF PRESIDENT SARKIS WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY SUCCESSFUL EFFORTS TO BRING ABOUT AN EFFECTIVE CEASEFIRE. WE BELIEVE THE EMPHASIS SHOULD NOW BE ON THESE EFFORTS AND NOT ON POSSIBLE MILITARY MOVES. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, WE DO NOT BELIEVE AN ANALYSIS OR PUBLIC STATEMENT ABOUT THE MILITARY SPECIFICS WOULD BE HELPFUL.

Q. COULD YOU GIVE US A GLOSS ON THE SENTENCE: "IT (PART-UNCLASSIFIED

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NEERSHIP OF EQUALS IN A REUNITED LEBANON) PRESUPPOSES THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE AT ITS DISPOSAL SECURITY FORCES

LOYAL TO IT WHICH CAN RESTORE CONFIDENCE IN THE AUTHORITY AND ABILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT TO MAINTAIN DOMESTIC ORDER?" WHAT DOES "PRESUPPOSES" MEAN?

A. WE BELIEVE THAT INTERNAL SECURITY IS A NECESSARY

CONDITION FOR A STABLE GOVERNMENT. IN REBUILDING NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AFTER A PROLONGED PERIOD OF CIVIL STRIFE, WE WOULD EXPECT THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT TO LOOK TO THE RECONSTITUTION OF A NATIONAL SECURITY FORCE.

Q. DO THE WORDS "DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVES" MEAN THAT THE SECRETARY OF STATE IS PREPARED TO GO BACK TO THE MIDDLE EAST TO EFFECTUATE A REDUCTION OF TENSION AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PEACE IN THE AREA?

A. THERE ARE NO PRESENT PLANS FOR A VISIT BY THE SECRETARY TO THE MIDDLE EAST.

Q. COULD YOU DEFINE FURTHER THE MEANING OF THE PHRASE "THE LEGITIMATE INTERESTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE?"

A. THIS PHRASE HAS LONG BEEN USED IN OUR STATEMENTS ON THE MIDDLE EAST. WE DO NOT BELIEVE IT WOULD SERVE ANY USEFUL PURPOSE FOR THE U.S. OR OTHERS TO PREJUDGE MATTERS WHICH SHOULD BE DEALT WITH IN THE PROCESS OF NEGOTIATIONS LOOKING TOWARD AN OVERALL SETTLEMENT OF THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT.

Q. THE SECRETARY HAS IN THE PAST SUGGESTED A ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE AND THE STATEMENTS REFERS TO PRESIDENT SARKIS' MENTION OF A ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE. DOES THIS MEAN THAT PRESIDENT SARKIS IS ENDORSING THE SECRETARY'S CONCEPT OF A ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE?

A. IN SPEAKING OF A ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE, THE SECRETARY WAS SUPPORTING AN IDEA PUT FORWARD BY VARIOUS PARTIES IN THE AREA, INCLUDING PRESIDENT SARKIS SOME TIME AGO.

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Q. WHAT IS THE U.S. GOING TO DO TO BRING AN END TO THE FIGHTING AND ADVANCE A POLITICAL SOLUTION?

A. WE HAVE BEEN AND WILL REMAIN IN CONTACT WITH THE LEBANESE PARTIES AND THE AREA GOVERNMENTS CONCERNED TO CONTINUE OUR DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS TO ENCOURAGE A POLITICAL SOLUTION. WE CANNOT GO INTO THE DETAILS OF THOSE CONFIDENTIAL EXCHANGES BUT OUR STATEMENT TODAY CLEARLY SPELLS OUT WHAT THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF AN

APPROACH TO A SOLUTION ARE.

Q. WHAT STATES ARE BEING REFERRED TO IN THE PHRASE, "THE CONCERN OF THE STATES OF THE AREA FOR THEIR

SECURITY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY?"

A. ALL STATES OF THE AREA.

Q. PRESIDENT SARKIS PRAISED THE SYRIAN INTERVENTION IN LEBANON. WHAT IS THE U.S. ATTITUDE TOWARD THE SYRIAN INTERVENTION NOW AND HOW LONG SHOULD IT GO ON?

A. AS OUR STATEMENT TODAY SAID, WE BELIEVE THAT THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE AREA -- WHICH WOULD INCLUDE SYRIA -- CAN MAKE "CONSTRUCTIVE CONTRIBUTIONS" TO A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF THE LEBANESE CONFLICT.

Q. WHAT PRINCIPLES WERE PROPOSED IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY WHICH ARE REFERRED TO IN THE THIRD PARAGRAPH OF THE STATEMENT ON LEBANON?

A. ESSENTIALLY, THIS REFERS TO THE PRINCIPLES FOR ADJUSTMENTS IN THE LEBANESE SYSTEM DEVELOPED AFTER CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION AND ANNOUNCED IN THE SO-CALLED "BAABDA DECLARATION" OF FEBRUARY 14. THE DECLARATION INCLUDED SUCH REFORMS AS EQUAL CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM REPRESENTATION IN THE LEBANESE PARLIAMENT.

ROBINSON

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